

Friend for Life News

Changing of the Guard

The Friend for Life Cancer Support Network is excited to announce a new chapter in our organization's journey. We warmly welcome Sheri Donahue as our new Executive Director, following the remarkable legacy of Judy Kasey Houlette, who has dedicated over 25 years to supporting, comforting, and empowering individuals and families affected by cancer.

A Grateful Farewell to Judy Kasey Houlette



For over a quarter of a century, Judy Kasey Houlette has been the compassionate heart of Friend for Life. Through her vision and unwavering commitment, Judy has touched the lives of thousands of support seekers and volunteers, ensuring that no one navigates the cancer journey alone. Her leadership has been defined by empathy, kindness, and an ability to inspire hope in the face of uncertainty.

Judy's legacy is not only measured by the programs and initiatives she has established but in the countless

moments of comfort and support she has provided to those in need.

Through her vision and unwavering commitment, Judy has touched the lives of thousands of support seekers and volunteers, ensuring that no one navigates the cancer journey alone.

Her nurturing spirit has helped to create a community rooted in understanding and shared strength. As she steps down, we extend our deepest gratitude to Judy for her years of passionate service, and we wish her joy and fulfillment in the next chapter of her life.

Welcoming Sheri Donahue

As we bid farewell to Judy, we are pleased to introduce Sheri Donahue as our new Executive Director. Sheri brings with her a wealth of experience, energy, and a commitment to continuing the mission that has been so close to Judy's heart. We are confident that under Sheri's guidance, Friend for Life will continue to expand its reach, strengthen its programs, and provide invaluable support to even more individuals and families facing cancer.

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FRIEND FOR LIFE

CANCER SUPPORT NETWORK

OUR MISSION

To help adults diagnosed with cancer and their loved ones navigate the path through diagnosis, treatment and recovery by pairing them with a trained survivor of a similar experience so they can face cancer with someone who's been there.



Contact us:

- staff@friend4life.org
(502) 893-0643 Phone
(866) friend-4 Toll-free
www.friend4life.org
- Become a fan on
[Facebook](#)
[Instagram](#)

Changing of the Guard (cont'd)



The transition marks both an end and a new beginning—one we approach with gratitude for the past and optimism for the future. Sheri is dedicated to honoring the foundation laid by Judy while bringing fresh ideas and leadership to our network.

Looking Forward Together

On behalf of the Friend for Life community, we invite you to join us in expressing heartfelt thanks to Judy Kasey Houlette for her unparalleled service and in welcoming Sheri Donahue to her new role. Together, we will continue our shared mission: ensuring that no one faces cancer alone.

Thank you, Judy. Welcome, Sheri.

Kristen Mellinger

Board Chair, Friend for Life

Celebrating Judy's Retirement!

After more than 25 years of dedicated leadership, **Friend for Life** will bid a heartfelt farewell to our Executive Director, **Judy Kasey Houlette**, as she begins her well-earned retirement.

Judy has been the guiding force behind Friend for Life, helping thousands of individuals and families find hope, comfort, and connection through our peer-to-peer support program. Her vision and compassion have shaped our organization and touched countless lives.

To honor Judy's remarkable service, we invite you to join us for a **Retirement Party Open House**:



Wednesday, January 7, 2026

5:30 – 7:30 pm

RFX Technologies, 8901 Greeneway Commons Pl., Louisville, KY 40220

Please RSVP by Jan 5 to: Sheri@Friend4Life.org or (502) 893-0643

This will be a wonderful opportunity for friends, supporters, and community members to stop by, share memories, and thank Judy for all she has done for Friend for Life. Whether you've worked alongside her, received support through our network, or simply admire her dedication, your presence will help make this celebration truly special. (If unable to attend in person, please send your memories and best wishes to Sheri@friend4life.org and they will be given to her at the party.)

Please join us as we celebrate Judy's legacy and wish her joy in the next chapter of her life.

Welcoming 2026 with Exciting Updates

As we step into the new year, Friend for Life is thrilled to share some exciting changes and opportunities designed to strengthen our community and enhance the volunteer experience. 2026 will be a year of growth, connection, and renewed commitment to our mission—and we couldn't do it without you!



Volunteer Feedback Survey — Your voice matters! Early in the year, we'll be launching a Volunteer Feedback Survey to hear directly from you about what you'd like to see added, improved, or changed. This is your chance to shape the future of Friend for Life and ensure our programs reflect the needs and passions of our volunteers.

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Welcoming 2026 with Exciting Updates (cont'd)



Monthly E-Newsletter Starting in January, we'll be sending out a monthly e-newsletter packed with:

- Upcoming events and activities
- New volunteer opportunities
- Highlights of volunteer stories and achievements
- Resources to support your journey with Friend for Life

This will be your go-to guide for staying connected and informed.



Strengthening Outreach — We're also expanding our **outreach to existing volunteers**. Expect more personalized updates, check-ins, and opportunities to reconnect with fellow volunteers. Our goal is to make sure every volunteer feels valued, supported, and engaged.



Upcoming Events — 2026 will bring a variety of events—both new and familiar favorites. From community gatherings to training sessions, there will be plenty of ways to get involved, learn, and share together. Stay tuned for details in our first e-newsletter of the year!



What's Next? - Friend for Life is committed to evolving with our volunteers. With your feedback, we'll continue to explore new initiatives, strengthen our programs, and create meaningful opportunities for connection.

Together, let's make 2026 a year of impact, compassion, and community.

Thank you for being a Friend for Life!

Merry Christmas



Happy New Year!